

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
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Attorney General Applauds Passage of Bill Expanding District's Ability to Hold Neglectful Landlords Accountable

OAG Partnered with Councilmember Nadeau, OTA, DCRA to Draft Legislation

WASHINGTON, D. C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine applauds the Council's passage of a bill that expands the District's ability to hold landlords accountable if their failure to meet maintenance obligations forces tenants out of their homes. The bill empowers the District's Office of the Tenant Advocate (OTA) to recover costs of emergency assistance to tenants from a housing provider if that provider's neglect caused their tenants to be displaced. It also allows OTA to impose a lien on the landlord to collect unpaid reimbursements for such assistance to tenants.

"Ensuring that all District residents have safe and affordable housing is a priority, and I applaud the Council for granting OTA greater authority to protect and house tenants in dire need as well as granting my office greater ability to assist them in doing so," said Attorney General Karl A. Racine. **"This bill makes it clear that housing providers must meet their obligations."**

[The Relocation Expenses Recoupment and Lien Authority Amendment Act of 2016 \(Bill 21-656\)](#) was drafted collaboratively by Councilmember Brianne Nadeau, the Office of the Tenant Advocate (OTA), the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA), and the Office of the Attorney General (OAG).

OAG's work on the legislation is part of the office's broader work to protect tenants and address the District's affordable-housing crisis. Most recently, [Attorney General Racine filed his second lawsuit against Sanford Capital](#) for a pattern of neglect at an affordable apartment complex it owns in Ward 8. The suit over the Terrace Manor property follows [a similar complaint OAG filed earlier this year](#) over a Sanford-owned complex in Congress Heights.